

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SANTIA 00414 202253Z

64

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1831

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 0414

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, SHUM

SUBJ: RELEASE OF SENIOR DETAINEES

1. SUMMARY. SAWYER OF EX-FONMIN CLODOMIRO ALMEYDA (RELEASED AND EXPELLED TO ROMANIA JAN 11) JAN 17 GAVE EMBOFF ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON ALMEYDA CASE AND SPECULATED ON IMMINENT RELEASE OF SEVERAL OTHER SENIOR DETAINEES OF ALLENDE PERIOD WHO ARE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO FRG. HE BELIEVES (AND EMBASSY AGREES) THAT RELEASES ARE CONNECTED TO PROSPECTIVE VISIT TO CHILE OF SECRETARY KISSINGER, AND TO GOC'S NEED FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE THIS YEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. SOURCE SAID ALMEYDA HAD PHONED HIM FROM BUCHAREST. INDICATED THAT DECISION TO RELEASE ALMEYDA AND OTHERS MUST HAVE BEEN MADE SUDDENLY: THE FIRST THEY KNEW OF THEIR IMMINENT RELEASE WAS ON BEING TAKEN UNDER GUARD TO ROOM WITH TELEVISION SET EVENING JAN 10 TO WATCH SPEECH OF INTERIOR MIN BENAVIDES ANNOUNCING THEIR RELEASE AND DEPARTURE NEXT DAY (SANTIAGO 0217). ONLY THEN WERE THEY ALLOWED TO TELEPHONE
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PAGE 02 SANTIA 00414 202253Z

FAMILIES TO PREPARE FOR THEIR TRIP.

3. ACCORDING TO LAWYER, AND CONSISTENT WITH WHAT ROMANIAN CHARGE TOLD EMBOFF (REF A), NO CONDITIONS WERE REQUESTED OF ALMEYDA. LAWYER THOUGHT ALMEYDA INTENDED TO STAY IN ROMANIA FEW MONTHS, THEN MIGHT GO TO PRINCETON UNIVERSITY TO TAKE UP OFFER OF SIX-MONTH RESEARCH GRANT. HE SAID HE EXPECTED ALMEYDA TO AVOID GETTING ON INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT OF CHILEAN EXILES, AND IMPLIED HIS BELIEF THAT ALMEYDA WOULD BEHAVE IN WAY INTENDED TO BUILD UP IMAGE AS RELATIVE MODERATE WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO WORK WITH DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN CHILE IN POST-JUNTA PERIOD.

4. REFERRING TO GOC'S OFT-STATED PRINCIPLE THAT IT CANNOT RELEASE DETAINEES WHO HAVE ENTERED JURISDICTION OF COURTS, LAWYER SAID GOVT HAD WITHDRAWN ITS APPEAL TO SUPREME COURT OF EARLIER COURT ACTION THROWING OUT CASE AGAINST ALMEYDA (SANTIAGO 6504).

5. LAWYER EXPECTED THAT HUGO MIRANDA AND OTHER RADICAL PARTY SENIOR LEADERS IDENTIFIED WITH ALLENDE COALITION AND DETAINED WITH ALMEYDA AT RITOQUE WOULD BE RELEASED INTO EXILE BY END OF MONTH. HE NOTED FRG INTEREST IN THESE MEN IN ADDITION TO ALMEYDA. SINCE CHARGES WERE BEING PROCESSED AGAINST MANY OF THEM FOR WHITE COLLAR CRIMES, LAWYER OPINED THAT GOC WOULD FIND WAY OF RELIEVING THEM OF CHARGES, PERHAPS BY CHANGE IN STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS OR ALLOWING THEM TO PAY FINES. (PERSONS CONCERNED ARE: ARLANDO CANTURARIAS, CARLOS MORALES ABARZUA, CAMILO SALVO, ANSELMO SULE, HUGO MIRANDA--SANTIAGO 6504.)

6. COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND UNHCR BELIEVES IT HAS GOC COMMITMENT FOR EARLY RELEASE OF MIRANDA AND THAT VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT IS ALSO INTERESTED IN RELEASE OF RADICAL PARTY LEADERS.

7 SAME JUSTIFICATION USED BY INTERIOR MIN BENAVIDES FOR RELEASE OF ALMEYDA IN HIS JAN 10 SPEECH (SANTIAGO 0217) COULD APPLY TO RADICAL LEADERS: CHILEAN LAW DOES NOT COVER SERIOUS OFFENSES THEY COMMITTED AGAINST THEIR COUNTRY WHILE IN ALLENDE GOVT, AND THEIR OTHER OFFENSES ARE MINOR.

8. ALSO AS WITH ALMEYDA, GOC MAY CONCLUDE THAT RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH FURTHER RELEASES (POSSIBLE ANTI-GOC POLITICAL ACTIVITY ABROAD, APPEARANCE OF GIVING IN TO FOREIGN PRESSURE, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SANTIAGO 00414 202253Z

AND UNHAPPINESS OF GOVT SUPPORTERS AT LENIENCY) WOULD BE BALANCED BY ANTICIPATED IMPROVEMENT IN WORLD IMAGE.

9. SHOULD ALMEYDA APPLY FOR NIV TO TAKE UP GRANT IN PRINCETON, SAME PROBLEMS OF TRAVEL DOCUMENT (ROMANIAN PASSPORT VALID FOR SIX MONTHS -- PARA 2 REF B) AND BONA FIDES AS NONRESIDENT WOULD APPLY AS IN OTHER CASES BROUGHT TO DEPT'S ATTENTION (SANTIAGO 7737).

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